



MARCEL WANDERS

BlogTour had the opportunity to sit down with the enigmatic and brilliant Marcel Wanders of Moooi, nicknamed the "Lady Gaga of the design world," by The New York Times. Lynn Byrne of Decor Arts Now brings you the exclusive on what inspires him, what his dream project would be, and why exactly he stripped naked during a presentation to make a point.



I had trouble sleeping my first night in London. Sure, there was a little jet lag involved, but I also was a bit nervous about my BIG interview the next morning. Meeting and interviewing a design great such as Marcel Wanders (you do know his knot chair in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, right?) seemed a bit overwhelming. Turns out my nerves were unnecessary.

Marcel Wanders is one heck of a nice guy. He exudes optimism and good will. He was even a bit humble (ok, sort of) at times. Before it was all done, I had a little crush.

LB: Moooi, your company's name, derives from the Dutch word, beautiful. You added an extra "o" for extra beautiful. What do you find extra beautiful right now?

MW: Today we celebrate all of the many beautiful products here at Moooi. We are bringing Big Ben home (a new for 2012 design by Wanders), which is especially beautiful. It is a new thing that helps reminds us of the importance of time in our lives in an

old fashioned way—as a giant wall clock.

LB: You once said that the design process should make you feel like your life is exploding. What is exploding in your life right now?

MW: We are opening a hotel in my hometown, Amsterdam, called the Andaz Hotel. There will be video art in the wall for the very first time. That is exploding for me right now.

LB: You do it all—designing both products and interiors. Is the process different for you?

MW: The process is entirely different. When I design a product it is like one block of marble that I carve out until I am done. With interiors, I pull together multiple ideas from many different sources. It is much more like making a painting—I think about many colors, shapes and form.

LB: So you flunked out of your first design school. Do you have any advice for new designers on how to overcome obstacles?

MW: Well, I think the people who threw me out of design school were right. I wasn't ready for design school—yet. They wanted to teach me design—how to draw a nice curve, a perfect box—but I kept thinking outside the box. I made all of the mistakes that you could possibly make—you have to make mistakes. But, I did finally graduate from a design school. You must keep trying, but remain true to yourself too.

LB: You once streaked naked across a stage at the end of a major presentation. Tell us what that was all about.

MW: I wanted to make the point that when designers put out a new idea they are like someone naked. Still they should never fear. Plus, I think designers should always give more than people expect. I wanted to show that.

So, while I was giving this talk, I kept removing pieces of my clothing. When I was down to almost nothing, I left the stage. Then, I made sure all of the lights were out.

Boom, it was completely dark, no lights. Suddenly, I ran naked across the stage throwing out a big box of candy.

LB: What would you like to design that you have not designed yet?

MW: The thing that I want to design that I haven't designed yet is a mosque. I think design has the ability to speak volumes—to say something. If there is one thing this world needs is more respect for each other. If someone would give me the respect to design a mosque, I will give back that respect by doing it very well. That is why I want to design a mosque. I should do it one day.

LB: Tell me about the very interesting necklace you are wearing.

MW: My daughter likes beads and one day we started to make a necklace together. But very quickly I realize I want to make my own necklace. I start to collect and search for beautiful beads with an interesting story [He takes off necklace to show me]. There is delft blue, kidney stones, viagra [laughter], birthstones, lava, meteorite, baccarat. It has become the story of my life.

If that necklace represents Marcel Wanders' life, I would like to see it every year! I can only imagine how very interesting it will get.

